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A. D. T. WHITNEY

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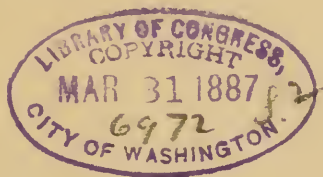
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DAFFODILS

"Pansies, and violets, and asphodel"

Delme
with
A. D. T. W.
"



BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY
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1887

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TO THE WAYFARER.

*Straight to the shining heaven the daffodil
Her cup doth bold;
Asking and gathering the sweet light until
It brims with gold.
Then, though the under-skies be dun and gray,
Earth cold and crass,
With changeless mien she sits there brave and gay
In the meek grass,
Showing her trophy of a fairer day
To all that pass.*

*If any little reaching upward so,
Above life's ills,
Have found the o'er-brooding summer, whose great glow
To gladness fills
Heart-blooms for me, — partake them as you go,
My daffodils.*



THE POSTMAN'S RING.



F all the parables, day by day,
That thrill the heart of this life of
mine, —

Making strange and beautiful sign
Of gracious meaning in common way, —
The very blithest and dearest thing
Is the sound in the house of the postman's ring.

It tells a story. Though deep and far
Stretch the want and the wish of man,
Hid in the bud of an infinite plan
All blessed and sure providings are.
God's love rings the bell at the door
That the postman stands and waits before.

For He knew when He made it, — earth and
sea, —

The world so wide, and his child so small,
Something must reach across it all
From heart to heart that would listening be ;
And so, from the first, He laid away
Seed of purpose, that fruits to-day.

And because no service of man to man,
No thought or method that matches need,
With outward emblem can half-way read
The depth divine of the heavenly plan,
Almost the dearest and hopefulest thing
In the livelong day is the postman's ring.

It minds me well if so sure a hand,
So glad a summons, may tell and send
Our earthly tidings from friend to friend,

There cannot be less in the Perfect Land.
Soul messages may not be stayed nor crossed :
Out of God's mails no letter is lost !

Dear heart, that dwellest I know not where, —
So near — so distant — I may not see, —
While I sit below with my thoughts of
thee,
Is some such usage of gladness there ?
Do the angels come to thy door and say,
“ We have brought thee a word from *her* to-
day ” ?

THE CLOSED GENTIAN.

I CLIMBED one day upon a great high shelf,
Where God rare things doth hide,
And found a poem that had writ itself
Against the mountain side.

A plant whose green spires something barely
grew

Held at its short, brave tips
Full-clustered flowers of vivid purple-blue,
Yet bud-like, with shut lips.

The delicate corollas swelled unsheathed
From calyx-cradles small,

In tender bells, with clear-curved veinings
wreathed,

That, closing, sealed them all.

I said, It is the Gentian. And I sought

For an unfolded one,

Just veiling with sweet fringes its heart-thought

Of gladness from the sun.

Vainly. It never opened, some one said ;

The strange, fair bud was all, —

A bright hope only half interpreted,

And shriveling to its fall.

I would not think it. Surely never so

The blessed types are set :

Still I went, wistful, searching to and fro,

The perfect word to get.

'T was there for reading. God's types take
large room,

With answering tokens rife :

Not far from the Closed Gentian shone white
bloom

Of Everlasting Life.

THE SUN-SEEKERS.

THE lark is the bird of the sunrise ;
But the woodcock's wonderful flight
Mounts up in the edge of the evening
Through the threat and shadow of night.

When the sun has dropped from the hill-top,
And the pastures, warmed all day
With the early touch of the springtime,
Are chilling quickly away ;

When the lingering, lengthening outlines
That each open level crossed,
Like shapes of the mortal lifetime,
In the wider dusk are lost ;

When the purl of the brook tells plainer
Its story of long-shed tears,
As there runs in the heart a ripple
From the tenderness of years ;

In the peace and pain of the twilight,
Which deeper we scarce can say,
For the sadness of things that are parted
And the calm of the things that stay, —

There breaks on the hush that bird-note,
That sudden and sweet unrest,
The “seek, seek, seek !” of the woodcock
From beside his darkening nest :

Merged in a quivering twitter,
Like an asking whither to go,
As he lifts his wings in the dimness,
And flies in a circle slow

Just over the tips of the grasses,
With a sweep that follows round
The verge of his home horizon
On some wood-rimmed upland ground.

Like one who carefully searcheth
Where a lost thing left the sight,
About and about he wheeleth,
And looks for the vanished light :

Each turn of his course still bending
To measure less of the ground ;
Winning a little way upward,
Nearer the heart of the round.

Passing the line of the tree-tops,
Leaving the brim of the hill,
Building his Jacob's ladder,
He closeth and climbeth still ;

Still with the querying music
As of that uprising word,
Grown tremulous with repeating,
And in broken echoes heard,

Till the last, least, upmost winding
Of the spiral stairway done,
At once from the heart and the highest
He crieth, "I see the sun!"

And oh, what a pæan of triumph
He brings from that instant's poise,
As down, defying the darkness,
He comes with a joyful noise!

Threading the selfsame pathway,
Missing no step of the stair,
All the way pouring the answer
Just where he rose with the prayer.

“I have seen, I have seen, the glory !

It is larger than east or west ;

And I know it is there above us,

Although it be night in the nest !”

Ah, the lark hath the message of morning,

The cheer of the day begun ;

But the woodcock, seer of the gloaming,

Sings, “ Shining shall never be done !”

THE MORNING MOON.

An old Moon with a waning breast
Quietly lingers down the west, —
An old Moon, worn and faint and sad.
Over the east the Dawn climbs, fresh and glad.

She walks straight on before the Sun:
Bars of amber and cinnamon
Kindle, and fuse, and separate ;
Then up the King rides, through the flamy gate.

The old Moon smiles above the hill,
Slips toward her setting, meek and still ;
Across the Earth's morn-burnished brim
This brief space, face to face, she looks on
him.

Soon the wide blue is softly paled ;

The perfect day moves glory-veiled,

And beauty burns on things below.

Just as it comes, why must the sweet Moon
go ?

For her long patience of the night,

O Earth, in her long patience bright

Swing slow, and let the meek Moon stay !

Foolish ! With her it has been always day !

What far-off splendor makes her fair

When your small night seems everywhere ?

Above the world's low-curving rim

Across *her* sky, she always looks on Him !

LIFE COLORS.

WHEN the sun is in the east
And the hill-tops flash with red,
Blue-dark stretches overhead
All the deep, untraversed day.
Still, along the morning way
Slopes of sky that sunward trend
Low their mellow arches bend,
With a tender light to fill
Of primrose and of daffodil:
Fair with glories half released,
When the sun is in the east.

When the sun is in the height,
All the heaven is pale with heat ;

So we walk with aching feet,
Daring not to lift our eyes
To that smiting from the skies.

Now, alas, we only know

Colors of the earth below ;

Glad of some benignant rest

In the greenness of her breast.

Blinding-full the day burns white,

When the sun is in the height.

When the sun is in the west,

And with backward smiling goes,

Then the past is flushed with rose.

Clouds that had been stormy-heaped

Rest in tranquil purples steeped ;

Where were white-hot stress and strain

Peace spreads azure calms again :

For life's primrose, faint and old,
Nightward sweep her tides of gold,
Grand with glories unrepressed,
When the sun is in the west.

RAINFALL.

I HEARD an old farmer talk one day,
Telling his listeners how
In the great, new countries far away
The rainfall follows the plough.

“As fast as they break it up, you see,
And turn the heart to the sun, —
As they open the furrows, deep and free,
And the tillage is begun, —

“The earth grows mellow; and more and more
It holds, and sends to the sky
A moisture it never had before,
When its face was hard and dry.

“And so, wherever the ploughshares run,
The clouds run overhead ;
And the soil that works, and lets in the sun,
With water is always fed.”

I wonder if that old farmer knew
The half of his simple word,
Or guessed the message, heavenly-true,
Within it hidden and heard ?

It fell on my ear by chance that day,
But the gladness lingers now,
To think it is always God's dear way
That the rainfall follows the plough.

THE HEART OF THE YEAR.

WHITE lay the world in her burial web :
Deep in December her life was at ebb.
Gray with great clouds, all the air-height was
dim ;

Frost-fingers, cruel and stealthy and slim,
Stiffened and sheathed every brier and stem,
Breaths of slow death-wind detaining on them.

Heavy tree-branches swayed upward, and fell,
Moved like the swing of a funeral bell.
Where were the toss and the shimmer of June ?
Glory of green, that had vanished so soon ?
Bird-song and bloom ? I outquestioned with fear,
“ Heart of the Winter, art Heart of the Year ? ”

Hush of the snow, and dull moan of the
trees, —

Durance of all, — was there answer in these?
Durance! That said it. The things that en-
dure —

Bear, and wait on — are the things that are
sure!

Not in the shroud, or the pall, or the tear, —
Deep in the life is the Heart of the Year!

Down where the pain and the shrinking can be
Bides the great Summer, for earth and for
me.

Down at the quick it must gather awhile,
Grow to the fullness, for blossom and smile:
Where the hope hides, under hindrance and
loss,

Lies the heart-presage, the sign of the cross!

Now it is June, and the secret is told :
Flashed from the buttercup's glory of gold ;
Hummed in the humblebee's gladness, and sung
New from each bough where a bird's-nest is
 swung ;
Breathed from the clover-beds, when the winds
 pass ;
Chirped in small psalms, through the aisles of
 the grass.

Beauty of roses, the lavish sweet light,
Splendor of trees, rearing up the blue height,
Smell of the strawberry, balsam of pine,
Bliss of the brook, and this rapture of mine ! —
Tell they not all, now their heyday is here,
Heart of the Summer is Heart of the Year ?

Billowing forest and balm-bearing breeze,
Outcome of life, — lies the answer in these ?

Waiting, fulfilling, — holds neither the whole ;
Greater the gospel than joyance or dole.
Whether his snows or his roses befall,
Heart of the Father is Heart of it all !

SPIKENARD.

WHAT was that box of spikenard, Lord,
Which Mary brought, and at thy feet
Broke, and the ointment on Thee poured
The while Thou sat'st with them at meat?

The house with the sweet smell was filled,
And all the chambers of the years
Are fragrant with those odors spilled,
And tender with that dew of tears.

Ah, Lord! do I not likewise bring
Before Thee, as I lowly kneel,
My costly grief, that hidden thing,
And for Thee only break the seal?

Thou seest, human as Thou art,
Yet glorified in God again,
The broken box, — a human heart, —
The precious oil, — its chrism of pain !

FORGETTING.

WE climb up the hill of the world,
The past slippeth under our feet ;
Our morning horizon is furled,
Though we move in a circle complete.

Far forward the curtain of time
Lifts slow, as the way stretches on :
Oh, is it a curse or a crime
That backward the vision is gone ?

Yes, "new every morning ;" but see
How I shrink from the strangeness away !
And "fresh every evening ;" ah me,
If the peace of past evenings might stay !

I know every line that was there, —
I know, but I never may hold;
In spite of my striving and prayer,
It is but a tale that was told.

All full is the pitiless space
Of a Now, while I cry for my Then,
Faded out like a fair, precious face
That I cannot make present again.

Forgetting? I will not forget!
I will turn in the way I have trod!
Nay, never was wayfarer yet
That could turn back the courses of God!

Be quiet; yea, restful in change:
In a circle of Love you are bound, —
Still meting a different range
Because its whole measure is round.

As sure as in vanishing haze
Your beautiful distance is rolled,
So surely in new-risen days
You shall its restoring behold.

Although the whole earth swell between,
Though eyes may be blinded and wet,
No vision is blotted, once seen:
For getting again, we forget!

Up over the height of the world
The sun walks with glorious feet;
Full eastward the planet is whirled,
And Life and the Day are complete!

MERIDIAN.

THERE is an acme of all toils and joys,
A crisis of fulfillment, when the sun
Hangs at the midsummer, with such a poise
As stayed the conquering noon on Gibeon.

There is a moment of the very good,
A sabbath-breathing of the Deity
Bending in crownèd bliss of Fatherhood
Above a world with Benedicite.

There is a summer solstice in the home,
Before a leaf has withered, or the brooks
Dried any drop, or any gap has come,
Or any sereness into life's sweet looks ;

When the white blooms and blushing fruits are
each

Set with one gradual beauty in the vine,
Their tiny fragrances akin and rich
With the deep essence of the tropic pine ;

When the bright field waves jocund all its
green,

Its future harvest tasseling to silk ;
Before the burdened ears begin to lean
With the world's grain, yet tender in the
milk.

It is the father's and the mother's time :

The family is full ; the house rings sweet
With baby words and young girls' laughter-
chime,

And the quick tread of coming manly feet.

They say, "It is all ours. This little space
We hold it back, and keep our dear reward.
Of earth and days it is our day and place,
And this our heritage before the Lord."

Mother, among your maidens so serene,
Now your life-flower its heart-deep color
shows :

Of womanhood you sit the absolute queen ;
On a full-budded stem the perfect rose.

No petal drooped from its consummate prime,
No breath lost of its odorous ecstasy ;
In this sweet, central moment of your time
You touch your secret of eternity.

Your sons beside you, father, ere they go
Out on the world-path to the work of men, —

Feel you not such a kinghood as you know

Your years shall never yield to you again?

They shall be kings, when you shall lay you
down

At the far end of your full-traveled road;
Kings of their time, heiring the selfsame crown,
The human parentage from Parent God!

Ah, noon *is* day! There is no other one.

Your central height is midmost being, too;
The radiant solstice of your summer sun
Is heart of the Forever unto you!

In tender round your earth doth measure
heaven;

In your own motherhood and fatherhood
Sonship and daughtership to God are given;
Sign joineth sign, and life is understood.

Ay ! Heaven is Home, and for "the kindreds"
built, —

Full of bright mansions sweetly separate,
Yet grand together, as the starways spilt
With suns as sand : a dwelling and estate,

Where all shall be all we have learned to be ;
Yes, and the thing we missed to learn, and so
In compensation of eternity
Shall but the dearer and the deeper know.

Fear not ! The living Lord's infinity
Hath but this type, where all is reconciled,
The perfect unit of his Trinity, —
Eternal Father and Eternal Child !

THEIR ANGELS.

My heart is lonely as heart can be,
And the cry of Rachel goes up from me,
For the tender faces unforgot
Of the little children that are not,

Although

I know

They are all in the land where I shall go.

I want them close in the dear old way ;
But life goes forward, and will not stay,
And He who made it has made it right.
Yet I miss my darlings out of my sight,

Although

I know

They are all in the land where I shall go.

Only one has died. There is one small mound,
Violet-heaped, in the sweet grave-ground :
Twenty years they have bloomed and spread
Over the little baby head ;

And, oh !

I know

She is safe in the land where I shall go.

Not dead : only grown, and gone away.
The hair of my girlie is turning gray
That was golden once, in the days so dear,
Over for many and many a year.

Yet I know,

I know,

She's a child in the land where I shall go.

My bright, brave boy is a grave-eyed man,
Facing the world as a worker can ;

But I think of him now as I had him then,
And I lay his cheek to my heart again,

And so,

I know

I shall have him there where we both shall go.

Out from the Father and into life ;
Back to his breast from the ended strife
And the finished labor. I hear the word
From the lips of Him who was Child and
Lord,

And I know

That so

It shall be in the land where we all shall go.

Given back, with the gain. The secret this
Of the blessed Kingdom of children is !
My mother's arms are waiting for me ;

I shall lay my head on my father's knee ;
For so

I know

I'm a child myself where I shall go.

The world is troublous, and hard, and cold,
And men and women grow gray and old ;
But behind the world is an inner place,
Where yet their angels behold God's Face.

And lo !

We know

That only *the children* can see Him so !

SONGS OF PRAISES.

IN a dried old mow that was once, alas !
A living glory of waving grass,
A cricket made merry one winter's day ;
And answered me this, in a wondrous way,
When I cried half sharply, "Thou poor old
thing !

How canst thou sit in the dark and sing,
When for all thy pleasure of youth thou star-
vest ? "

"I'm the voice of praise that came in with
the harvest."

I went away to the silent wood,
And down in the deep brown solitude,

Where nothing blossomed and nothing stirred,
Uprose the note of a little bird.

“Why carolest thou in the death of the year,
Where nobody traveleth by to hear?”

“I sing to God, though there be no comer,
Praise for the past and the promise of summer.”

I stopped by the brook, that, overglassed
With icy sheathing, seemed prisoned fast;
Yet there whispered up a continual song
From the life underneath that urged along.

“O blind little brook, that canst not know
Whither thou runnest, why chantest so?”

“I don’t know what I may find or be,
But I’m praising for this, — I am going to see.”

THE WITNESS.

THAT human hearts can lean on God

Is argument of Deity :

Unless a planet, how a clod

At rest in earth's great gravity ?

An Image stands all-glorious

Before our comprehension dim :

Either He hath created us,

Or our poor thought createth Him !

Are all the Wisdom, Might, and Love

That I have learned but part of me ?

Do I the possible reach above ?

Can I believe, and God not be ?

But — Infinite Kindness ! — Art so sure ?

Whence all the evil that we know, —
Souls born in ignorance, to endure
Each certain penalty of woe ?

Pitiful weakness, that must fail,
A groping blindness, that must fall,
And miseries waiting, — what avail
Had Love, when Power established all ?

Ah, in the dust we are sublime !
Even in our weakness we can bear !
Blind, can discern a coming time,
Wrong, to the Righteous lift our prayer !

Is ours the only tenderness,
The sole long-suffering ? Sinful, crude,
May we conceive what yet shall bless,
Can we still trust, — and God not good ?

KYRIE ELEISON.

IN his glory ! When the spheres
 Lighten with that wondrous blaze,
How shall all my sins and fears
 Meet thy dawning, Day of days ?

“Nothing hid !” No thought so mean
 That to darkness it may creep ;
Very darkness shall be seen,
 Very death to life shall leap.

Nothing deep, or far, or old ;
 Nothing left, in years behind ;
All the secret self unrolled :
 Light of God ! I would be blind !

Only I shall see a Face
In the glory lifted up ;
And a Hand, — the Hand of grace
Whose sweet mercy held the Cup.

And a Voice, I think, will speak,
Asking of each sin-defiled
Whom his saving came to seek,
As a mother asks her child :

“Wert thou sorry?”

“Yea, dear Christ,
Sick and sorry I have been,
Wearily thy ways have missed :
Wash my feet, and lead me in !

“Though in this clear light of thine
Sin and sore must stand revealed,

Though no stainless health be mine,
Count me, Lord, among the healed.

“Not with scribe and pharisee
Dare I crave an upmost seat ;
Only, Saviour, suffer me
With the sinners at thy feet !”

FULFILLED.

“ He was known of them in the breaking of bread.”

Good things had befallen me all through the
day :

A blessing of morsels, — small helps by the way ;
Work running on even, and coming out right ;
Bright thoughts with the morning, good words
at the night.

So evening was sweet, and as shadows fell deep
My spirit was turned to the Lord of the sheep.
“Thou leadest ! Thou feedest !” in silence I said :
“And the crumbs from thy hand are the best
of the bread.

“We know how Thou blessest and breakest it
then ;

Not giving thy life to the children of men
As whole in the loaf, and Thou done with us
so,

But meed to our need, every step that we go.

“O dear daily bread, and the thought for no more !
The not knowing whence, that is infinite store !
The grand peradventure it is to be poor,
Through sureness of waiting on Him who is
sure !

“O lilies and birds !”

In a redolence sweet
One word of the parable breathed at my feet ;
And a sign in the depths of the amber-lit west,
Alive with winged creatures, was saying the
rest.

They rushed up in clouds, like a tempest of
life;

All heaven was full of the beautiful strife;
From the gold to the blue in a rapturous chase
They crowded, and crowded, and yet there was
space.

They gathered and parted, they shot and they
swept,

Ever east, where the first early duskiness crept;
From heart of the glory to edge of the shade,
All the way as they moved a sweet scripture
they made.

For, swirling and darting, each line of their flight
Scored a letter of promise against the clear light:
“In a seeming of emptiness, teeming with good,
God’s forecastless swallows are finding their
food!”

SPRING IN THE CITY.

It is not much that makes me glad :
I hold more than I ever had.
The empty hand may farther reach,
And small sweet signs all beauty teach.

I like the city in the spring ;
It has a hint of everything.
Down in the yard I like to see
The budding of that single tree.

The little sparrows on the shed,
The scrap of soft sky overhead,
The cat upon the sunny wall,—
There's so much *meant* among them all.

The dandelion in the cleft
A broken pavement may have left
Is like the star that, still and sweet,
Shines where the housetops almost meet.

I like a little ; all the rest
Is somewhere ; and our Lord knows best
How the whole robe hath grace for them
Who only touch the garment's hem.



LITTLE MAID BERTHA'S STORK.¹



TURRET balcony, high in air,
On a castle grim and grand ;
And little maid Bertha standing there,
Feeding a stork from her hand.

“O beautiful summer-bird !” she said,
“Coming so sure to me
From the wide, white sands of the desert dead,
Or the Holy Land, over the sea ;

“Tell me some of the wonderful things
That you must certainly know

¹ From a real incident, told by one to whose knowledge it came while at the Syrian Mission in Beirût.

Of the countries where you shut your wings
And stay all the winter so ;

“ Of the broken palaces by the banks
Of the Nile, and the temples there,
That stand with their columns in awful ranks,
So still, in the silent air.

“ Have you made your nest on some monstrous
arch, —

I've seen the pictures, you know, —
Where Pharaoh's soldiers used to march
Out to battle, ages ago ?

“ Have you lit on the Sphinx's shoulder, dear ?
Did you learn any strange old word
That your grandfather Ibis used to hear,
But that men have never heard ?

“I believe the reason your bright red beak
Is dumb is because they sealed
Your bird voice up, lest a note should speak,
And their secrets be revealed.

“Have you looked old Memnon in the face?
Has he got any face? Or hid
Your brood far up on some reachless place
At the peak of a pyramid?

“Or, best of all, I would learn, sweet stork,
Of the streets and the temple-stairs
Where the dear Lord Jesus used to walk,
And the hills where He said his prayers.

“Did you ever light where the Christ sat down,
And the thousands below Him stood,

While He spoke to the world from the mountain's crown

His words of beatitude?

“Have you drunk from Jordan some blessed drop, —

Flown over Gennesareth?

Have you had a home on some pleasant top
Of a house in Nazareth?

“Did you ever live in Jerusalem?

Have you seen the Sorrowful Way,
Where the crowds rushed up, and He went with them,

On the Crucifixion Day?

“I'm sure you would stop on Olivet,
Where the Palm Procession trod.

Is the Saviour's footprint shining yet,
That He left when He rose to God?

"Ah, you cannot answer one word of mine,
My bird with the silent bill !
I'll wait, and watch for some different sign
You may bring or send me still.

"And see, I will hang about your throat
This locket, with silver chain ;
You shall carry in it the little note
I have writ, when you go again.

"I've begged the dear people where you may
be,
In the lands I have never seen,
To care for you when you are far from me,
And be kind as I have been.

“And perhaps some beautiful day next year,
When you come on your northward track,
And flap your wing at my window here,
You may bring me a message back !”

.

The winds blew sweet with the spring-time
smells

Of grass and blossom and tree ;
And hunters were out for the wild gazelles
On the plains of Galilee.

A troop of the swift, shy, graceful things
Went suddenly flashing by,
Like creatures skimming the earth with wings,
Or lightnings crossing the sky.

An aimless shot from a rifle rang :
Some birds rushed overhead ;

The gunner after his quarry sprang,
For a great white stork fell dead.

Ah, the little locket, the silver chain,
That they crowded round to see!
Never may Bertha's bird again
Go northward from Galilee!

I think there were tears in the sportsman's
eyes,
And his tone had a tremble, when
He drew from the trinket the strange surprise,
And read it to those rough men.

"'T was a pitiful chance!" spoke a comrade.

"Yes!"

The answer came ruefully.

"I think I would almost, sooner than this,
It had been my hand," said he.

They buried the bird in the hyacinths there,
Under Mount Tabor's foot;
Letter and locket they carried with care
To the Consul, in old Beirût.

.
"Fräulein von Wildberg." A packet came
One day to the castle gate.
Bertha, the child, scarce knows her name,
Writ out in its titled state.

An inner parcel. A letter. A stem
Of dried blue hyacinth bells;
And somehow tender with breath of them,
The story the letter tells.

"Died at Mount Tabor. Don't cry for me," —
So runneth the gentle word:
"For the Man who once walked in Galilee
Still cares for the child and bird."

There was bitter grief and sobbing awhile ;
Then she paused, and lovingly
Hung the locket about her neck with a smile.
“ I will wear it always,” said she.

“ And so it were best, if it were at all ;
For I truly can understand,
If ever He watches the sparrow's fall,
He would watch in the Holy Land.”

So sign and message came back to her, —
A burden of love and tears ;
Like a rose bound up with juniper,
To sweeten and heal the years.

Till for pain or gladness she had but this :
“ All cometh from One Good Hand ;
I know that the earth and our hearts are his,
And both are his Holy Land ! ”

THE CHRIST-CHILD AND THE CHILD- DREN.

MARY lay, meek and mild,
Straw-pillowed among the gentle kine, —
Mary, of Israel's kingly line,
And beside her the little Child.

Strangers were seeking her, —
Stately strangers before the gate ;
Leaving their laden camels to wait
With gold, and incense, and myrrh.

Wise men and sceptred kings ;
Led to the Baby from afar
By beautiful beckon of a star,
Bringing Him precious things.

The sweet girl-mother smiled,
With strange delight that was half a dread,
As they laid them down beside her bed, —
Gifts for the little Child.

Did the daughter of David know,
As she put them into his helpless hands,
How for little and poor in all the lands
Jesus received them so?

Or thought she, as she smiled,
How always, upon that blessed morn
When her Baby in Bethlehem was born,
The Child should give to the child

In homes that were to be?
Dividing the gifts from his manger-bed,
As He once divided the loaves of bread
To the people by the sea.

Ah, gifts of the Christmas-Day !
From the bitter and costly offered then,
And taken for sakes of the sons of men,
They have come down all the way !

HYMN FOR THE CHILDREN'S MISSION.

SEEK and save! Seek and save!

By his word the Eternal Christ
Yet on earth repeats the birth
Of the Life once sacrificed.

Seek and save! Seek and save!

Little angels who behold,
Far and dim, the Face of Him,
Wander in the waste and cold.

Verily, verily,

By each help you hold to them,
In so much your fingers touch
Of his robe the living hem.

Bear them up! Bear them up!

Lift his garment from the dust:

So to you shall ever new

Flow the grace wherein we trust.

Bethlehem! Bethlehem!

Still thy manger, Lord, we see;

Still may say, 'Tis Christmas Day

Every day we do for Thee!

FEBRUARY.

WILL winter never be over ?

Will the dark days never go ?

Must the buttercup and the clover

Be always hid under the snow ?

Ah, lend me your little ear, love !

Hark ! 't is a beautiful thing :

The weariest month of the year, love,

Is shortest and nearest the spring !

GRANDMAMMA'S VALENTINE.

"Two little birdies after one fly!

Wonder if may be they mean you and I,—

Will-Boy and Jim?

Two little b'udders, — that you can see, —

And if one of 'em's you, and the other is me,

Wonder who's *him*?

"Butterflies is such — ex-tron-ymous things!

Nothing at all but just two little wings.

Guess they must be

Live thinkie-winkies. Wonder if this

Is n't a think, or a sweet flying kiss

F'om Gannie to we?

"S'pose we can catch it? And then if we do,
Is one half for I, and the other for you?

Or, s'pose we just *look!*

A fly does n't want to be tore into two,—

And a kiss is as good, when you know it has
flew,

As if it was took!"

THE DEACON'S LITTLE MAID.

IN this new world that was waiting when
The Star in the East shone down,
And lighted the steps of the Magian men
To the inn in Bethlehem town, —

Many a hillside sloped to the sun,
Or dipped to a shining sea,
Fair for God's presence as ever one
In Judah or Galilee.

Many a soul that was tarrying then
Till centuries should go by,
To take its place in the line of men,
To the Lord was just as nigh

As John, or Mary, or Lazarus,
Who walked with Him by the way,
For the blessed sign it should be to us
That He walks at our side to-day.

So, lovely with love that hath no compare,
The very names grew dear ;
And Maries and Johns are everywhere,
And Bethels are builded here.

Deep in the green New England hills,
In a dimple fair to see
With orchards whose fruitage the summer fills,
Lies a little Bethany.

And looking eastward between the farms,
As over the river you go,
Stately with elms as the old with palms,
You may see sweet Jericho.

What wonder that Mary, the little maid,
Pondering Bible lore,
Pictured, wherever her steps had strayed,
Those marvelous things of yore?

That the darksome hollow beyond the bridge,
Where the pollard willows stood,
And the steep, rough roadway up the ridge?
In the gloom of the hemlock wood,

Should seem like the wayside where the thieves
Beset the traveler-man,
And left him, all wounded, upon the leaves,
For the Good Samaritan?

Or the scathed old pear-tree by the brook,
That the lightning in a night,
When the farm-house with the thunder shook,
Left ghastly, and dead, and white,

Should be to her fancy the fig-tree, bare,
Or yielding but bitter and worst,
That the Lord, when He found it fruitless there,
With an endless withering cursed?

That scanning the houses far away
On the hillsides in the sun,
She questioned, many an innocent day,
Which was the very one

Where the brother and sisters sat at meat
With their Friend, when the day was low,
And Mary lovingly washed the Feet
That had journeyed in mercy so?

She was Deacon Sternbold's little maid;
Her mother was Kindly True:
Primer and hymns to her sire she said,
But her heart the mother knew.

Helping the dame one Saturday morn

At the churn, all suddenly she

Cried, "Mother, oh, I wish I'd been born
Real Mary of Bethany!

"Or I wish that Jesus would walk in here,
And would call me to Him, and say,
With his eyes' great glory upon me, 'Dear,
Come sit at my feet all day!'"

"And does n't He?" answered the mother sweet.

"Can you think it, except He say?
To love Him well is to sit at his feet, —
To serve Him, to bide alway.

"Now bring me the tray, and the spats and
prints,
Cool in the well-head there ;

Then finish the seams of your gown of chintz
That to-morrow you may wear.

“And if baby wakes from his long nice nap,
Just sing him your little song
While mother's busy; the work mayhap
Won't need to hinder us long.”

Maid Mary went at the gentle word;
Some beautiful inward smile
Dawning up to her face, as if she heard
More than was spoken the while.

For the child's deep heart was beating still
With joy of that saying sweet:
“To bide with Him is to do his will,—
To love Him, to sit at his feet.”

So while she fetched the spats and the prints,
And hastened away to sew
With ready fingers the gown of chintz,
She went as the angels go.

And sitting there by the cradle-side,
When a comrade lifted the latch,
And eagerly signed to the pasture wide,
And whispered, "Blackberry patch!"

Softly she shook her delicate head,
But smiled as she did it, too;
Till the other guessed she must know, instead,
Of a pleasanter thing to do.

And when the baby awoke at last,
Fretting with sleepy whim,

Though the seam was done, and an hour was
past,

Still she smiled, — “I can wait, with *Him!*”

When the older brothers came whooping in, —

Roger and roguish Dan, —

Routing her quiet with rollicking din,

And teasing, as brothers can ;

And father, vexed at a mischief played,

Full hastily called and chid, —

Never a cloud on the face of the maid

The beautiful brightness hid.

For what could take her with ill surprise,

Or what could provoke a frown,

When she knew the glory of Jesus' eyes

Was over her, looking down ?

So Saturday's nightfall folded the hill,
And the Day of the Sun broke bright,
And the good folk gathered, sedate and still,
In the meeting-house on the height.

With her tender secret in her face,
Maid Mary sat in the pew;
The Lord, who was here in his Holy Place,
Had been at home with her, too.

And when the people stood up to pray,
As the custom used to be,
She whispered, "Dear Christ, like yesterday
Make all the to-days, for me!"

Ah, many a Mary, merry or staid,
On the hillsides there might be:
But was not the Deacon's dear little maid
Real Mary of Bethany?

MIDSUMMER WORDS.

WHAT can they want of a midsummer verse
In the flush of the midsummer splendor?
For the Empress of Ind shall I pull out my purse,
And offer a penny to lend her?
Who wants a song when the birds are a-wing,
Or a fancy of words when the least little thing
Hath message so wondrous and tender?

The trees are all plumed with their leafage superb,
And the rose and the lily are budding;
And wild, happy life, without hindrance or curb,
Through the woodland is creeping and scudding.

The clover is purple; the air is like mead,

With odor escaped from the opulent weed,
And over the pasture-sides flooding.

Every note is a tune, every breath is a boon ;
'T is poem enough to be living.

Why fumble for phrase while magnificent June
Her matchless recital is giving ?

Why not to the music and picturing come,
And just with the manifest marvel sit dumb,
In silenced delight of receiving ?

Ah, listen ! Because the great Word of the Lord,
That was born in the world to begin it,
Makes answering word in ourselves to accord,
And was put there on purpose to win it.
And the fullness would smother us, only for
this, —

We *can* cry to each other, "How lovely it is !
And how blessed it is to be in it !"

“NIGH AND BY.”

A BEAUTIFUL plaything in a drawer,

A beautiful book on a shelf:

Mamma will bring them to read and show her ;

She may not have them herself.

Precious treasure, hidden and high,

Held with the promise of “By and by.”

“Nigh and by !” says the child,

As she lets them go,

And folds her hands with a quiet look :

“Nigh and by, mamma, when I grow !”

“Ain’t they your ownty-donty, then ?”

A playmate teases one day.

“*I* would n’t care for pretty things when

They were always put away !”

It never had come to her so before :

She waits a minute, — ponders it o'er ;

Then the old " Nigh and by ! "

Rings cheery and true.

" You see — they are ownty-donty, *now* ;

Nigh and by, they'll be ownty-*do* ! "

Baby wisdom is angel grace,

And a lisp translateth new

Promise that speaks in the Father's face,

Hidden from me and you.

Heart that yearns for the put-away,

The sweet child-syllables learn to say !

For the hard " By and by,"

If we search it through,

With double sureness of " soon " and " nigh,"

Is dearer synonym than we knew.

THE DEAR LOST THING.

A toy balloon of gorgeous red

Made the child's heart all bounding glad.

"Oh, see, mamma! It is," he said,

"The dearest thing I ever had!"

Held by a slight and silken thread,

The fairy globe, so round and clear,

Now close beside, now overhead,

Swung in the sunny atmosphere.

A something in the joyous word,

A something in the slender hold,

Touched the deep mother-thought, and stirred

An anguish tongue hath never told.

This was her gentle second-born ;
Her first, — ah, just so proud and glad,
She cried of him, one vanished morn,
“The dearest thing I ever had!”

In just such weak, uncertain grasp
She held her joy, undreaming pain ;
The frail cord snapped ; her love’s wild clasp
Clung to its drifting strand in vain.

“Gone !” The low word of letters few
That thrills like stroke of passing bell,
The pang repeating, ever new,
On her heart’s silence quivering fell.

She half forgot the boy who played
About her feet, this summer day.
“Only a little year !” she said :
“Only just now, — and now, away !”

A sudden wail of baby woe, —

Ah, baby woe, that comes so soon !

“ I did n’t mean to let it go ! .

O mamma dear ! My dear balloon !

“ It flew, — right up, — so high, so high ! —

Just where dear brother Johnnie flew !

Did some one pull it from the sky ?

Did brother Johnnie want it, too ? ”

No answer : close the darling pressed.

“ He *may* ! He ’ll keep it safe,” he said.

The mother caught him to her breast ;

And so the two were comforted.



SILVER WEDDING.



IVE and twenty! Solemn and clear
Rings the chime of the silver year!
Hundreds by hundreds the days are gone,
Thousands by thousands the hours have flown,
Millions by millions the minutes rushed on:
Half the wealth of a human life
Counted over, — husband and wife!

Five and twenty! May they be told
Once again to the year of gold!
Hundreds of happy days to come,
Thousands of blessed hours to bloom,
Millions of minutes to make the home
Fairer, richer, in later life:
Count them onward, — husband and wife!

Little measures, of swift record,
Lost in the wonderful Year of the Lord,
Whose minutes are deeds that the angels do,
Whose hours are struck by the Word of the
True,
Whose Day is the Love that lights them
through.
In the timeless Year of the Perfect Life,
Count your wedlock, — husband and wife !

GOLDEN TIMES.

THE east is golden when our day is born ;
Purple and amber stretch the canopies
Above the cradle of the commonest morn.
And yet the beauty of those opening skies
Is scarce for us, but gladdens elder eyes :
We do not wake to see our own sunrise.

There is a golden hour of day and year,
All spring, all morning : every field is prime
With green, and starred with glory ; memory here
Begins the count of joy ; a happy chime
Where smallest pleasure makes the roundest
rhyme, —
Our buttercup and dandelion time.

There is a shining as the sun climbs on,
Between the dawn and midday ; when our June
Warms toward the solstice, and we feel upon
Our life the joy, not burden, of its noon, —
Prelude, like sweetest cadence of a tune,
To the full chord that shall be sounded soon.

Then golden lilies in the garden gleam,
And roses blow, and orioles build and sing ;
And sparkles flash upon the brimming stream,
And butterflies go by on yellow wing ;
And fireflies shine, and brighter than the
 spring
Are stars, and moons, nights, days, and every-
 thing.

High noon next, and full summertide. The press,
The heat, and toil bear down upon us. How

In this mere sufferance and breathlessness
The color of our daylight may we know?
God fills the sky so full, it does not show
The sweetness of its splendor as we go.

And yet the fiery days, as they speed past,
Are golden times, — the golden time of work,
And faith, and strength, and loyal holding fast,
However the hard stress may pain and irk :
God knows the blessings that among them lurk
Wait only for the soul that scorns to shirk.

And then, at last, the mellowing of the leaf,
The leaning of our sun toward its west,
The great, rich ripening of the tawny sheaf ;
All shadows backward flung, our clouds all
drest

In their praise-garments ; time of wage and
rest, —

Of all our times the goldenest and the best !

So comes the golden wedding : heaven and earth
Make new espousals ; that world touches this ;
A selfsame glory hangs o'er death and birth ;
The evening purple on our mountains is
A morning climbing Eden's with a kiss,
Melting to one full peace both mysteries.

OUR HOME-MAKER.

WHERE the mountains slope to the westward,

And their purple chalices hold

The new-made wine of the sunset,

Crimson, and amber, and gold,

In this old wide-opened doorway,

With the elm-boughs overhead,

The house all garnished behind her,

And the plentiful table spread,

She has stood to welcome our coming,

Watching our upward climb,

In the sweet June weather that brought us,

Oh, many and many a time !

To-day in the gentle splendor
Of the early summer noon,
Perfect in sunshine and fragrance,
Although it is hardly June,

Again is her doorway opened,
And the house is garnished and sweet;
But she silently waits for our coming,
And we enter with silent feet.

A little within she is waiting,
Not where she has met us before;
For over the pleasant threshold
She is only to cross once more.

The smile on her face is quiet,
And a lily is on her breast;
Her hands are folded together,
And the word on her lips is "rest."

And yet it looks like a welcome,
For her work is compassed and done ;
All things are seemly and ready,
And her summer is just begun.

It is we who may not cross over :
Only with song and prayer,
A little way into the glory
We may reach, as we leave her there.

But we cannot think of her idle ;
She must be a home-maker still :
God giveth that work to the angels
Who fittest the task fulfill.

And somewhere yet in the hill-tops
Of the country that hath no pain,
She will watch in her beautiful doorway
To bid us a welcome again.

H. B. S.

JUNE 14, 1882.

QUEEN of the months of the year,
Hour of her crowning and prime!
Everything royal and dear
Comes in this bountiful time.

Everything noble and high,
Everything lowly and sweet:
Tree-tops are grand in the sky,
Daisies in bloom at our feet.

Roses aglow in the sun,
Grass growing rich for the blade;

Summer's sweet marvel begun
New, as it never were made.

Sunshine, and blossom, and song ;
Glory, and beauty, and praise :
Blessing and gladness belong
To souls that are born in such days.

Came she but these to inherit,
Signs of her nature's attune,
Joyous and affluent spirit,
Born in that far-away June ?

Gladdest is tenderest, too,
Joy is diviner of trouble ;
Power hath a service to do,
Sight that is true seeth double.

“We and our neighbors.” That word
Grew in the heart of her heart;
Haunted the life-feast, and stirred
Plea for a people apart.

“Seest Thou, hearest Thou, not?
It faileth!” was all she said:
Leaving her prayer with the Thought
That cares for the children’s bread.

She minded the marriage board,
The wine that had not sufficed,
And one who looked to the Lord,—
Mary, the mother of Christ.

“It faileth!” was all she said.
She knew that He knew the rest;
That his ear interpreted
The longing of her request.

Unto such pitiful asking

Strange that the answer should be,
Swift and keen with its tasking,

"What have I to do with thee?"

"My time yet cometh." "Ah, Lord!"

That cry for a people's pain
Went up afresh with a word
That would not beseech in vain:

"Behold the death of their living,
The anguish of thy long years!
The thirst for the wine of thanksgiving, —
The drink of their bitter tears!"

Thirsted and suffered they still:
Strange were the waiting and loss;
None to deliver his will,
None to bear forward his cross!

“Waiteth it even for *me* ?

Message, and process divine —

‘*Woman, what do I with thee?*’

Was it denial or sign ?

“Was it rebuke or a mission,

For her who turned in a breath,

Commanding, with holy prevision,

‘Do ye whatever He saith!’

“Yes, — though ye hear the sentence,

‘Go, fill ye up to the brim

The measure of your repentance!’

Fill up, and bear unto Him!”

Into the hearts of the human

Purification of tears:

That was the work of the woman ;

God gave the wine of the years !

Mary, elect of the Lord!

Yield we thy praise to another?

She who hath wrought for his word

Is daughter, and sister, and mother.

LIFTED UP.

T. J. M.

O SPIRIT so gentle and strong,
And fair with an honor unpriced !
So swerveless to shadow of wrong,
Yet kind with the kindness of Christ !

O heart great with brotherly love !
O thought swift with help and with cheer !
O life hidden holy above,
Yet lowly and diligent here !

O friend, whom no moment did miss
Of need, where thy comfort could be !

What hand shall uphold us in this,
And who shall console us for thee?

We follow. We follow and go
Where Jesus went up with the three,
And the glory of heaven did show
On the mountain in Galilee.

And, living, we see thee stand,
As Elijah and Moses stood,
At the living Lord's right hand,
In the shining of angelhood.

And we know that the hills of God
Slope down from their uppermost height
With the pathways, messenger-trod,
Into our sorrow and night.

O spirit most gentle and strong,
Most ready with service unpriced!
Brave for us against our own wrong,
And kind with the kindness of Christ!

Great heart, and pure life, and swift thought!
Ye do kindle and move for us yet:
The friendship that earth hath so wrought
Eternity will not forget!

No moment thy comfort shall miss,
No need, where thy comfort can be!
Thy love holdeth steadfast through this, —
Thyself shall console us for thee!

HENRY W. BELLOWS.

THEY miss him in the city and the church,
And in the councils of strong, reverend men,
Where silence listens, and desire doth search
Vainly for voice and power that not again
May come among them as they came before.
Do the hills miss him more?

The hills that were his strength, that were his
home.

A man of Sinai, to lead forth a crowd
And sway its souls, with word his spirit clomb
The solemn peaks for; uttering aloud
What God, behind the thunders, whispered
low.

Thus did he come and go.

But the heights held him. In a hidden peace
He kept their stillness: their ineffable airs
Stirred in his nature with their pure release,
And gave the breath to his uplifted prayers.
"Only to shut his eyes," where'er he
trod,
And he was with his God.

We saw him on our plane of common things,
Forgetting that we saw not all of him.
Before the veil, invisible were the wings
Where dwelt the Presence 'twixt the Cheru-
bim:
Deep in the ark, hid unprofaned away,
The testimony lay.

He who once went beyond, that He might be
Forever nearer, and without a veil

Temple Himself in life, that souls should see
His human glory, though the heavens grow
pale
Before the unclothing of the full Divine,
From out this world of sign

Taketh his prophets who have known of Him;
Calleth them where consummate vision fills
The eyes that shut because earth's light was
dim;
Lifteth the feet that scaled these lesser hills,
And on the eternal summits planteth them
Of his Jerusalem.

Do the hills miss them? Do the heights complain
Whence they ascended? Rather are they filled
With new unfoldings that our sight constrain.

Our common things and thoughts, forgotten,
stilled,

Roll off in mists that had the real hid,
And lo! a pyramid,

Built from the pattern of the mountains, stands,
A revelation lovely and sublime,
Like the great pillar on Egyptian sands,
Above the shifting level of our time:
Height that doth index all the realm below,
And heart and border show!

Searching our lives by life that towereth on;
Testing our little being and our way
With the pure measures that were laid upon
Their larger lines in some creative day;
That, Lord of Hosts! among thy hosts
might be
Such witness unto Thee!

OUR MOTHER.

M. D. P.

BROKEN and worn. For years we saw her so ;
Dropping from strength, from time detaching
slow ;

And scarcely could we know
How earth's dark ebb was Heaven's bright
overflow.

"She is so old," we said. The cloud and pain
Half hid her, till we sought with loving strain
Her very self in vain.

Her *very self* was growing young again !

She has come back ! The cloud and pain are
o'er ;

The dear freed feet but touched that other
shore

To turn to us once more
The nearer, like her Lord who went before.

Our young, strong, angel mother ! From the
years

Triumphant life its shining garment clears,
And all its stain of tears
And weariness forever disappears.

Old — broken — weak ? 'T was but the shatter-
ing might

With which a grand soul broke toward the
light,

Rending its bands of night
That it might stand, full-statured, in God's sight.

The calyx burst that it might loose the flower ;
We saw the mist but by the sunbeam's power ;

 The dusk that seemed to lower
Was of the morning — not the midnight hour.

And so a Birth, not Death, we stand beside ;
Our own fast-gathering years come glorified ;

 And braver we abide,
That we have seen Heaven's great door flung
 awide.

ANSWER TO A FRIENDLY VERSE.

EACH sweet acknowledging thing
That comes to me
But this delight doth bring, —
That I may be
Small almoner to the King.

If I took home your verse
And claimed it mine
As praise, I should be worse
In sight Divine
Than Judas with the purse.

Truth that is told or known,
By you or me,

Is the Lord's gold alone :

His treasury

Distributes but his own.

Then, though we live thereby

In common weal,

Neither may you nor I

One penny steal

Selfhood to glorify.

Dear friend, I take the hand

Of fellowship

You reach ; I understand

Beyond the lip :

We're of one tongue, one Land !

A GOOD-BYE.

THIS thing we learn while here below, —

Nothing complete and finished is :

We do but gather, as we go,

Beginnings and half-knowledges.

Only a little depth we trace

The secret of another mind :

We look our friendship in the face

With eyes short-holden, hindered, blind.

And then, at once, the day is done :

Our world turns round, and east is west ;

Half scanned our swift horizons run,

And life may never know the rest.

Nay ; the brief times are in his hand

Who portioned, keeps, and can recall.

Plain in his sight our fragments stand

A perfect story ; Heaven holds all !

THE TWO POWERS.

(FOR "SWORD AND PEN.")

TAKE thy pen, O prophet ! Write.
Tell the world thy spirit-sight.
All thy errand swift record
Straight from whispers of the Lord !
Double edges of his truth,
Messages of wrath and ruth,
Flash upon men's eyes in words
Like the gleam of naked swords.

God would save the nations, when
For the Sword He sends the Pen !

Warrior, gird thyself with might !
Bare the blade, and seek the fight !

Sin's broad page is crimson-writ,
Crimson now must cancel it.
Folded is the prophet's scroll,
Silence waits within his soul ;
For the warning mercy-call,
Burns a judgment on the wall.

When the reckoning is scored
God's Pen is a flaming Sword !

Write once more, strong scribe, and say
How they faced that fearful day :
Quit them righteously and well,
If they stood or if they fell ;
Or, if giving half their life
In the hot and sudden strife,
Calm they bore the crowning test,
Rendering in slow pain the rest !

In such histories of men,
Measure still with Sword, O Pen!

Powers of word and powers of deed!
One the anointing, one the need:
Still foresay, and still fulfill
All that grand, mysterious Will
In whose might the peoples move
To their franchisement above.
Sign and story still record
Straight from purpose of the Lord!

His own time He knoweth, when
He shall lay down Sword and Pen!

THE GREAT PYRAMID.

ACCIDENT, OR TESTIMONY?

God is not vague, extemporaneous ;
He is not Lord Almighty by caprice :
Though all be fluent to immediate touch,
And all obedient to instant thought
Of Power and Will that in Him are the Life,
Yet o'er the floods of possibility,
The rolling waters of the world to be,
Moved that great thought in pondering of Law ;
And held, as left hand in the grasp of right,
The waiting act. His awful Infinite —
Space without space, and Time that hath no
term —
He put in measurement ; made definite ;

Sent forth creation from a dread reserve,
Causing sweet order to be slowly born,
Instead of ruin from unstinted force.

So in the waters laid He the great beams
Of fair and solid chambers; so He weighed
The separate grains of each considered earth,
And in his measure comprehended them;
Meted the heaven with an accurate span;
By the pure scale and balance of his truth
Portioned out hill and mountain; held the drops
Of seas and rivers in his hollowed hand
Before He let them fall to find their way
In seeming of their free, sweet wanderings.
Wherefore took He such counsel in that day?

Because He was to be the Lord of Hosts;
Because his creature was to live, and know

How absolute and righteous was his plan ;
Because there should be truth 'twixt God and
man,

And right 'twixt neighbor and the neighbor so ;
• Because the perfect way the child must see,
That as the Father he might perfect be.
From such necessity, to such dear end,
God wove in dust the voiceless parable,
And by calm hindrance of omnipotence,
Wonder of number, miracle of line,
Set in each work his secret and his sign !

If in this temple of the universe,
This builded revelation of a pile
So reared and stretched that none may scan
the whole,
Or lay, as this to that, by utmost thought,

Proportion to proportion, or convey
Impression to impression, till he feel
Any faint shadow of its sense complete, —
If so, with eager yet inadequate feet,
We stand in entrance-ways of awful aisles
That open through the eternal distances, —
What word have we if somewhere in its gates,
Or grand foundation, or on corner stone,
We find a graven rule and diagram,
So clear compared with each initial known
That none may doubt the unknown in it
waits ?

Because the finished pillars rise in light,
The lines severe blossom with sculptured grace ;
Because the arch is vast and blue the height,
And the great tides of music sweep the place,

Shall we the vouchsafed verity pass by
That doth the whole compel and underlie, —
Dare to deny before we understand,
And spurn the witness of the Builder's hand?

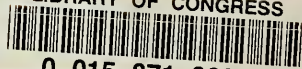
FOR A CHURCH DEDICATION.

To God the Father, in the height,
As children living in his light,
We build : O Lord, descend with grace,
And tabernacle in the place !

To Christ the Son, whose love did make
His flesh a temple for our sake,
We build : Lord, give us here to see
The Face of thy Humanity !

Unto the Spirit, whom in vain
The Heaven of heavens would quite contain,
We build : O Lord, thy presence pour,
And dwell with us forevermore !

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